

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DENVER – March 4, 2014 – The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing recently received approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to provide 12 months of continuous health care coverage to children enrolled in Medicaid or Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+). Medicaid and CHP+ are free or low cost public health insurance programs for Coloradans who qualify.

"The Department, along with our county, community partners, and children's advocacy groups continue to work towards a healthier Colorado," says Susan E. Birch, MBA, BSN, RN, executive director. "Twelve months of continuous coverage for Medicaid and CHP+ children will foster continuity of care, provide consistent access to preventive services and shift towards greater use of primary care medical homes. Continuous coverage also helps to facilitate relationship development between health care providers, children and parents."

Beginning March 1, 2014, children enrolled and those who newly qualify, will remain covered by Medicaid or CHP+ for 12 months even if their family's income or household size changes. Children applying for coverage and currently enrolled children do not need to take action; 12 month continuous coverage will be automatically applied. The Department expects more than 535,000 children in Colorado will benefit from 12 months of continuous coverage.

The new 12 month continuous Medicaid and CHP+ coverage for children is financed by the Colorado Health Care Affordability Act and was signed into law in 2009. This Act has previously funded additional health care coverage expansion programs for CHP+ children and pregnant women, adults without children, and the Medicaid Buy-In programs for children and working adults with disabilities.

Colorado is one of 24 states that now provides continuous coverage for children in both Medicaid and CHP+. Medicaid coverage for adults will remain month to month. The Department has not received legislative or federal approval for adults to have 12 months of continuous coverage.

For more information please see the Department's frequently asked questions at: <u>Colorado.gov/hcpf/benefits.</u>

**About the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing**: The department administers the Medicaid and Child Health Plan *Plus* programs as well as a variety of other programs for low-income Coloradans who qualify. The mission of the department is to improve health care access and outcomes for the people we serve while demonstrating sound stewardship of financial resources. For more information about the department, please visit Colorado.gov/hcpf.

## Medicaid & CHP+ Continuous Coverage for Kids Frequently Asked Questions

#### What is 12 month continuous eligibility or coverage for children?

Twelve months of continuous coverage for children is a new policy for children enrolled in Medicaid and Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+). Starting March 1, 2014, children in Medicaid or CHP+ will get 12 months of guaranteed coverage, even if their family's income or size changes.

### Who can get 12 months of continuous coverage from Medicaid or Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+)?

Children who qualify for Medicaid or Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+) under the age of 19 are guaranteed 12 months of coverage. Twelve months of guaranteed coverage for children starts March 1, 2014.

## My child has Medicaid or Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+), do I need to do anything for them to get 12 months of continuous coverage?

No. Children currently enrolled in Medicaid or Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+) do not need to do anything. Twelve months of continuous coverage is automatic starting March 1, 2014. You do not need to apply or request 12 months of continuous coverage for your child.

# My child has Medicaid or Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+). My income has changed since we were approved for Medicaid or Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+), will this impact my child's coverage?

No. Children who qualify for Medicaid or Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+) under the age of 19 qualify for 12 months of continuous coverage, even if the family's income changes. Changes to a family's income may impact an adult's coverage. <u>Adults over the</u> age of 19 do not qualify for 12 months of continuous coverage.

## Can adults get 12 months of continuous coverage for Medicaid or Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+)?

No. Adults over the age of 19 cannot get 12 months of continuous coverage for Medicaid or Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+). Colorado does not have legislative or federal approval to provide adults with 12 months of continuous coverage for Medicaid or CHP+.

#### How can I get additional information?

If you have questions about twelve months of continuous coverage for children, call the Medicaid Customer Contact Center at 1-800-221-3943/ TDD 1-800-659-2656. Hours: Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. (closed state holidays). Please be advised the call volume is high and wait times can be up to an hour.

You can also visit <u>Colorado.gov/hcpf/benefits</u> to see more comprehensive Frequently Asked Questions on this new policy.